



Idaho Farm Update

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North Idaho

Harvest is complete in North Idaho, so job opportunities on farms will be very limited until spring. Workers at the hops farms in Boundary County have almost completed winterizing the fields. Ornamental tree nurseries in Bonner and Boundary Counties recently hired extra crews for tree grading and shipping work that will last until mid-November. In the next week or two, Christmas tree farms will begin hiring workers for Christmas tree harvest. Workers at tree nurseries and tree farms typically earn between \$6.00 and \$8.50 per hour.

Southwest Idaho

In Southwest Idaho, the majority of the cornfields have been harvested, as have the mint fields. The potato and onion harvests are in full swing, and area packing sheds and food production companies continue to hire workers, with pay ranging from \$5.15 to \$7.00 per hour. Sugar beet harvest is just beginning in a few select fields, which is increasing the demand for harvest truck drivers. The pay is \$7.00 to \$10.00 per hour.

The harvesting of onions, potatoes, and sugar beets should continue through the end of October. This typically signifies the end of most harvest activity in Southwest Idaho. No labor shortages have been reported in Southwest Idaho, although area-packing sheds in the western portion of the region are looking for production workers to sort and pack potatoes and onions.

South Central Idaho

Most farm field and crop work is completed and most surface water suppliers will cut their supplies by October 15, 2004. There are only a few more days or weeks left in the late season sugar beet and potato harvest in South Central Idaho. There are a few openings for truck drivers at \$8.00 to \$10.00 per hour with duration of 10-30 days at the maximum.

Some ranchers still need ranch hands to help bring cattle from the mountain grazing lands to winter quarters. Horse riding abilities are a strong plus. The wages are \$7.00 to \$9.00 per hour, and most offer room and board.

There are a few jobs for milkers and relief milkers. Milkers receive \$20,000 to \$25,000 per year and relief milkers receive \$8.85 to \$10.00 per hour.

Southeast Idaho

Currently and over the remainder of the farming season, crop activity will consist mainly of beet, potato, alfalfa, and corn harvest. Growers will continue to plant winter wheat, and irrigate as needed and prepare fields for winter. Harvest workers are needed throughout the Southeast area until mid-November.

Current labor needs include general farm workers/laborers at \$5.15 - \$8.00 per hour, potato sorters/processors/handlers at \$5.15 - \$6.50 per hour, harvest truck drivers \$6.50 - \$10.00 per hour, sugarbeet harvest workers at \$8.50 per hour, cellar help \$5.50 - \$6.50 per hour, Hyster drivers at \$7.00 - \$7.50 per hour, and sheepherders at \$7.00 per month plus room and board.

Northeast Idaho

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This is the last issue of the *Farm Labor Update* for 2004. Look for the 2005 edition next Spring.

This bulletin is intended for information only, not for recruitment.